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INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1243

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000130

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STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA, INR/R/MR, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC KMDR KPAO PGOV PREL VE CI

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - CHAVEZ'S SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

¶1. On January 22, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record "El Mercurio" (circ. 129,000) ran an editorial entitled "Risks in Bolivia." Quote:

"Morales' means of advancing his controversial electoral promises are preventing him from capitalizing on the auspicious conditions under which he assumed office.... The international community is starting to get worried about Bolivia's precariousness and repercussions [of that instability] across its borders...(those developments and) its growing dependence on the Venezuelan government...are of some concern to our country...."

¶2. On January 20, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record "El Mercurio" (circ. 129,000) ran an opinion column by former Foreign Minister and Ambassador Hernan Felipe Errazuriz entitled "It Is What It Is." Quote:

"Hugo Chavez, Evo Morales, Rafael Correa and Daniel Ortega seek to establish 'Twenty-First Century Socialism'.... With the neighboring 'socialisms', confusion and risks are increasing.... We should not be concerned by (Evo) Morales and (Chilean Foreign Minister Alejandro Foxley's) jogging and Chavez' stroking the President. Those are the tricks of the trade. What should be a matter of concern is that our foreign policy could be mistakenly confused with that of an uncertain and retrograde Latin America."

KELLY